

and brought him up as her own son; how she lived in isolation in France under an assumed name; how Dick, who had not died as reported, returned from Africa and married Crystal, being unable to find Dorothy; how he grew to be tremendously rich and powerful as a journalist; how Crystal rose to be a shining member of society in London; how her fashionable excesses weakened her heart; how when he was 19 years old, she learned that the boy she had supposed to be Dorothy's son was her own son; how she was so shocked in consequence (this will seem queer to the reader, considering all his previous understanding of her) that she died; how the son had extraordinary tantrums on learning that Dick was his father; how the tantrums were allayed finally (two found ourselves willing to spare them) and how Dorothy at last, at the age of 39, felt herself at liberty to make Dick happy. We cannot say that any of these characters engaged our interest very strongly. We thought Dick boisterous, Dorothy too good and on occasion not a little exasperating, Crystal wholly rude and repellent and the son a lunatic charged with unheard of emotions. But certainly there is plot in the story.

#### A Religious Reformer.

In Mr. W. J. Dawson's story of "A Prophet in Babylon" (Fleming H. Revell Company) we read of the Rev. John Gaunt; how he was the brilliant pulpiteer of a fashionable New York church; how though his powers remained, his congregation declined; how the deacons got after him; how he made a radical change and entered upon a service of works as well as of words; how he planned and carried on great religious enterprises that had in view the relief and elevation of the people; how the League of Service was established with a House of Joy in Washington Square and Madison Square Garden for the chief meeting place; how envy, hatred and malice followed Mr. Gaunt as well as love; how he was shot by an assassin while marching with banners and song in a funeral procession; how he recovered from his desperate wound and entered upon a great final period of triumph and joy. The story is somewhat formal in manner. It lacks the facile art that is employed in fiction usually. We think, however, that there are plenty of readers who are prepared not to mind that. A story of protest and purpose and suggestion that are in themselves interesting.

#### Humor.

Since Mr. Wallace Irwin made the Hoodlum Sonnets immortal he has found many imitators, more or less flatterers. Some of Mr. Nixon Waterman's "Sonnets of a Building Bard" (Forbes and Company, Chicago), if the author had not been carried away by the funniness of the second person singular of the verb; with this he consistently and thoroughly spoils his verses. This is the more regrettable because the colored illustrations by Mr. John A. Williams are admirable, extremely funny as caricatures and beautiful in execution. In making up her selection of eight verses for this year Miss Carolyn Wells beats about the bush endeavoring to find a definition that will describe "A Vers de Société Anthology" (Charles Scribner's Sons). She is not particularly successful and some of her choices seem strange, but all depends from the point of view and some people may find the society side of Sir Philip Sidney's and Shakespeare's songs. Much of the verse in the anthology is interesting, all is light and some of the pieces are not easily found nowadays.

For another year the public is supplied with its provision of inverted maxims and sayings in "The Quite New 'Yonic' Calendar," by Ethel Watne-Munford Grant, Oliver Herford and Addison Mizner (Paul Elder and Company), bound in tartan plaids. Mr. Herford's illustrations do not come up to the promise of his frontispiece. The wit

is of the character provided in earlier calendars by this firm.

For automobilists a collection has been made of humorous verse and prose stories by Ralph E. Lyon with the title "A Bunch of Horseless Nonsense" (The Guarantee Publishing Company). Much of it is taken from periodicals and some of it is amusing.

An aid to the unscrupulous and the uninvincible is provided in "Toasts and After Dinner Stories" (Brewer, Barnes and Company, Chicago). From the selection was inferred that the practice of toasting in verse is prevalent. Some of the stories are good; many have stood the test of after dinner use for years.

#### Some November Fictions.

A pretty good collection of short stories by writers who have been connected in one way or another with California has been made by a San Francisco authors' club with the title "The Spinners' Book of Fiction" (Paul Elder and Company, San Francisco). The proceeds from the sale will augment a fund which will be used first to help a veteran author who was made destitute by the earthquake and fire. The stories are, taken them all in all, fair examples of what the authors can do. Mrs. Gertrude Atherton takes the lead with an unpublished tragic little tale, and fifteen others, among them Mary Halleck Foote, Eleanor Gates, Geraldine Bonner, J. London, H. M. Ridout, Charles Warren Stoddard and R. W. Tully, follow with stories reprinted from magazines. There is also a story by the late Frank Norris. The book is illustrated with six good colored pictures and with tasteful decorations, but its chief ornament is the beautiful print.

Once more Mr. Ralph Henry Barbour takes up his favorite theme of the conquest of the Southern woman's heart by the attractions of the Northern male in "Holly" (J. B. Lippincott and Company), published in holiday dress. Other publishers might take a hint from the attractiveness of these pages that depend simply on broad margins unstained by "decorations." The story is pretty and simple, a shade too mellifluous, it may be, and with a bit of unnecessary complication at the end that jars somewhat on its idyllic peacefulness.

That he has learned some portion of the art of writing a mystery story Mr. Burton E. Stevenson shows in "That Affair at Elizabeth" (Henry Holt and Company), but the detective part is by no means satisfactory. He tells his story with the requisite breathlessness and mixes up his two intrigues skilfully, so that the reader is properly perplexed and interested. It is hard to see of what use the one detective is, however, save to be the narrator, while the shrewdness of the other must be taken on faith. The author's praise of "yellow journalism" is as ingenious as it is undemonstrated.

The nine stories included in "Tales of a Small Town," by "One Who Has Lived There" (J. B. Lippincott and Company), seem to be for the most part studies in pessimistic realism. The descriptions of country conditions and scenes are good, but the tragedies are sensational and follow European models rather than the ways of American rural communities. They may have all happened, and possibly in the same place, but it is unfortunate that the chronicle of the town thought fit to leave out the pleasanter side of life there.

Horreplay properly managed may be laughable, but when a single comical situation brought about with much straining of probability is spread over a whole long volume, as is the case with "Feminine Finance," by Frances Crouch (R. W. Dodge and Company, New York), the effect is pretty wearisome. It is the fable of the grasshopper and the ant long drawn out, with the ant's faults viciously emphasized. She and the person of easy morals who forces herself upon her may be intended as portraits; there is a shiftless male who

Continued on Eighth Page.

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